



ABBA® SuperTrouper





ABBA Super Trouper

■ ABBA Super Trouper

Super Trouper was first released in Sweden as Polar POLS 322 on November 3, 1980. Recording sessions began in February 1980 and continued until October 1980. The album was recorded at Polar Music Studios in Stockholm, Sweden and at Wembley Arena in London, England.

◀ ABBA with friends at the Super Trouper sleeve session, October 1980.

A circus of emotions

Liner notes by Carl Magnus Palm

Super Trouper, ABBA's seventh album, was released in Sweden on November 3, 1980, only a few weeks after the last mixing sessions for the album. This was not the first time that ABBA had completed an LP just shortly before it was due for release. In this case the recording of the title track started as late as a month before the album reached record shops.

Work on the *Super Trouper* LP had commenced in January, when Björn and Benny flew to Barbados for a songwriting holiday. It was a repeat of the previous year's fortunate experience in the Bahamas, where they wrote several of the songs for the *Voulez-Vous* album.

This time they completed no less than five songs: *Andante*, *Andante*, *The Piper*, *Happy New Year*, *On And On And On* and *Elaine*. The first four songs were included on the completed album, while *Elaine* ended up the B-side of the single *The Winner Takes It All*. It has been added as a bonus track to this CD release of *Super Trouper*. Among the other of these first few

songs was *Happy New Year*, which actually started life as an idea for a musical. The plot would be centred around a New Year's Eve, a thought that got into Björn and Benny's heads on the plane over to Barbados. They ran into the comedian John Cleese at the holiday resort and asked him if he would be interested in writing a manuscript. When Cleese turned them down, the idea was abandoned.

After the first basic recordings had been completed, ABBA travelled to Japan in March for a two week period of concerts. It marked the completion of the tour that had been started in North America and Europe the previous Autumn. It was also the group's last-ever live performances on foreign soil. ABBA were never especially fond of touring, so it has to be assumed it was not with especially heavy hearts that they returned to Sweden afterwards.

April saw the completion of the first tracks for the album. Songwriting and recording sessions then continued throughout

The album cover and the video for Super Trouper were made at the same time.





the Spring and Summer of 1980. This period produced the first single to be released from the album. *The Winner Takes It All* is by common consent regarded as one of ABBA's very best recordings, and perhaps Agnetha's finest vocal performance ever.

Lyricist Björn has admitted that the words to the song were coloured by the divorce between himself and Agnetha. But he has also pointed out that the lyrics were more a reflection on the painful experience of splitting up, rather than a literal depiction on what the couple had been through. "There were no winners in our divorce", as he so succinctly put it.

The Winner Takes It All was accompanied by an evocative video, as ever directed by Lasse Hallström (today a prominent movie director in his own right: *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*, *The Cider House Rules*, *Chocolat*, etc.), with Agnetha acting the part of an abandoned woman amidst the other three, happily laughing band members. The single hit number one in countries such as Great Britain, The Netherlands, Belgium and South Africa, reaching the Top 5 in plenty more. Around the same time that

write more personal lyrics. *Our Last Summer* was based on his own melancholy memory of a teenage romance in France.

Towards the final sessions for the album, it was decided that the LP was going to be titled *Super Trouper*. The name referred to the colloquial term for the gigantic spotlights used at events such as stadium concerts. With Frida on lead vocals, *Super Trouper* was yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA. In some countries, *On And On And On* was chosen as the second single instead. In Australia, for instance, the song became a Top 10 hit.

Album cover designer Rune Söderqvist and photographer Lars Larsson associated the spotlights with a circus environment, however. "Circus" became the keyword in their discussions, and one thing led to another. Their idea for a sleeve design was to take a picture of ABBA surrounded by circus performers – in London's Piccadilly Circus.

But those plans soon ground to a halt. Söderqvist was informed by the London authorities that there was a law against entertainers or animals appearing in the central parts of the city. Apparently, this was because there are so many theatres in the

"The words to the song were coloured by the divorce"

The Winner Takes It All was made, ABBA also recorded *Our Last Summer*. On this song, it was Frida who handled the lead vocals. The words were yet another example of Björn's tendencies to

area, and they would otherwise have taken the opportunity to stage publicity stunts. That effectively killed the London idea. Instead, the decision was made to stage a photo shoot in Stock-

ABBA Super Trouper

holm. The Europa Film Studio was booked for the evening of October 3, 1980. Genuine circus performers were hired, while the ABBA members and their friends brought together as many

the photo session for the album sleeve, Björn and Benny set to work in the studio to try to come up with a new song. By pure luck, the album title that had already been chosen happened to

“Super Trouper was yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA”

acquaintances as they could find. The purpose was to create the feeling of a huge crowd surrounding ABBA in the picture. Apart from the circus artists, the people appearing in the cover picture are employees from ABBA's record company Polar Music, some fellow musicians and singers, as well as personal friends who had absolutely no connection to the music business. All the assembled acquaintances were instructed to dress up in various festive costumes and to apply heavy make-up.

While plans for this album sleeve photo session were made, ABBA were in the very last stages of recordings for the new album. A few weeks earlier they had recorded stand-out tracks such as *Me And I*, featuring an Eartha Kitt-inspired lead vocal by Frida, and *Lay All Your Love On Me*, an Agnetha-led dance track which gained a limited single release in the Spring of 1981. The group also started work on a song called *Put On Your White Sombrero*. But a while into the recording of the track, the group started feeling that they hadn't got it exactly right. The decision was made to leave the track unreleased. Just a few days before

fit as the title to the new composition as well. *Super Trouper* became the opening track on the new album, as well as the second single to be released from the sessions. With Frida on lead vocals, *Super Trouper* became yet another worldwide smash hit for ABBA.

Put On Your White Sombrero, which also featured a Frida lead, would languish in the vaults for 14 years before it was included on the box set *Thank You For The Music* in 1994. By that time, Björn and Benny had changed their minds about the recording and were quite happy to see its release. Naturally, *Put On Your White Sombrero* has been included as a bonus track on this CD.

Super Trouper became one of ABBA's best-selling albums ever. The closing track of the LP was *The Way Old Friends Do*, a live recording from the group's shows at Wembely Arena in November 1979. In hindsight, this *Auld Lang Syne*-style song functioned as a farewell to the more public part of the group's career. ABBA's wind-down years were waiting around the corner. =

Björn and Benny with director Lasse Hallström during the making of the Happy New Year video. ➤





01 Super Trouper

B. Andersson/B. Ulvén/
Universal/Union Songs AB

Super Trouper beams are gonna blind me
But I won't feel blue
Like I always do
'cause somewhere in the crowd there's you
I was sick and tired of everything
When I called you last night from Glasgow
All I do is eat and sleep and sing
Wishing every show was the last show
(Wishing every show was the last show)
So imagine I was glad to hear you're coming
(Glad to hear you're coming)
Suddenly I feel all right
(And suddenly it's gonna be)
And it's gonna be so different
When I'm on the stage tonight
Tonight the
Super Trouper lights are gonna find me
Shining like the sun
(Super Trouper)
Smiling, having fun
(Super Trouper)
Feeling like a number one
Tonight the
Super Trouper beams are gonna blind me
But I won't feel blue
(Super Trouper)
Like I always do
(Super Trouper)
'cause somewhere in the crowd there's you

Facing twenty thousand of your friends
How can anyone be so lonely
Part of a success that never ends
Still I'm thinking about you only
(Still I'm thinking about you only)
There are moments when I think I'm going crazy
(Think I'm going crazy)
But it's gonna be alright
(You'll soon be changing everything)
Everything will be so different
When I'm on the stage tonight
Tonight the
Super Trouper lights are gonna find me
Shining like the sun
(Super Trouper)
Smiling, having fun
(Super Trouper)
Feeling like a number one
Tonight the
Super Trouper beams are gonna blind me
But I won't feel blue
(Super Trouper)
Like I always do
(Super Trouper)
'cause somewhere in the crowd there's you
So I'll be there when you arrive
The sight of you will prove to me I'm still alive
And when you take me in your arms
And hold me tight
I know it's gonna mean so much tonight
Tonight the
Super Trouper lights are gonna find me
Shining like the sun

(Super Trouper)
Smiling, having fun
(Super Trouper)
Feeling like a number one
Tonight the
Super Trouper beams are gonna blind me
But I won't feel blue
(Super Trouper)
Like I always do
(Super Trouper)
'cause somewhere in the crowd there's you

02 The Winner Takes It All

B. Andersson/B. Ulvén/
Universal/Union Songs AB

I don't wanna talk
About the things we've gone through
Though it's hurting me
Now it's history
I've played all my cards
And that's what you've done too
Nothing more to say
No more ace to play
The winner takes it all
The loser standing small
Beside the victory
That's her destiny
I was in your arms
Thinking I belonged there
I figured it made sense
Building me a fence
Building me a home





ABBA Super Trouper

Thinking I'd be strong there
But I was a fool
Playing by the rules
The gods may throw a dice
Their minds as cold as ice
And someone way down here
Loses someone dear
The winner takes it all
The loser has to fall
It's simple and it's plain
Why should I complain
But tell me does she kiss
Like I used to kiss you
Does it feel the same
When she calls your name
Somewhere deep inside
You must know I miss you
But what can I say
Rules must be obeyed
The judges will decide
The likes of me abide
Spectators of the show
Always staying low
The game is on again
A lover or a friend
A big thing or a small
The winner takes it all
I don't wanna talk
If it makes you feel sad
And I understand
You've come to shake my hand
I apologize
If it makes you feel bad

Seeing me so tense
No self-confidence
But you see
The winner takes it all
The winner takes it all

03 On And On And On

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvén)
Universal/Union Songs AB

I was at a party
And this feller said to me
Something bad is happening
I'm sure you do agree
People care for nothing
No respect for human rights
Evil times are coming
We are in for darker nights
I said who are you
To talk about impending doom
He got kinda wary
As he looked around the room
He said, I'm a minister
A big shot in the state
I said I just can't
Believe it, boy
Think it's great
Brother can you tell
Me what is right and what is wrong
He said, keep on rocking baby
'Til the night is gone
On and on and on
Keep on rocking baby

'Til the night is gone
On and on and on
'Til the night is gone
On and on and on
Keep on rocking baby
'Til the night is gone
On and on and on
'Til the night is gone
Over in the corner
I could see this other guy
He was kinda flirty
He was giving me the eye
So I took advantage
Of the fact that I'm a star
Shook my hair and took
A casual stroll up to the bar
And as sure as hell
This guy was coming up to me
He said, who am I and
Who are you and who are we
What's our situation do
We have some time for us
I said, I was not exactly
Waiting for the bus
He said, if you're going
Somewhere can I come along
I said, keep on rocking baby
'Til the night is gone
On and on...

04 Andante, Andante

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

Take it easy with me, please
Touch me gently like a summer evening breeze
Take your time, make it slow
Andante, Andante
Just let the feeling grow
Make your fingers soft and light
Let your body be the velvet of the night
Touch my soul, you know how
Andante, Andante
Go slowly with me now
I'm your music
I am your music and I am your song
I'm your song
I am your music and I am your song
Play me time and time again and make me strong
(Play me again 'cause you're making me strong)
Make me sing, make me sound
(You make me sing and you make me)
Andante, Andante
Tread lightly on my ground
Andante, Andante
Oh please don't let me down
There's a shimmer in your eyes
Like the feeling of a thousand butterflies
Please don't talk, go on, play
Andante, Andante
And let me float away
I'm your music
I am your music and I am your song

I'm your song
I am your music and I am your song
Play me time and time again and make me strong
(Play me again 'cause you're making me strong)
Make me sing, make me sound
(You make me sing and you make me)
Andante, Andante
Tread lightly on my ground
Andante, Andante
Oh please don't let me down
Make me sing, make me sound
(You make me sing and you make me)
Andante, Andante
Tread lightly on my ground
Andante, Andante
Oh please don't let me down
Andante, Andante
Oh please don't let me down

05 Me And I

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

Sometimes when I'm mad
There's a part of me that seems to be a little sad
Sometimes when I scream
There's a voice in me that says,
"You shouldn't be so mean"
Oh no, oh no
Part of me is acting while the other stands beside
Yes, I am to myself what Jekyll must have been to Hyde
We're like sun and rainy weather
Sometimes we're a hit together

Me and I
Gloomy moods and inspiration
We're a funny combination
Me and I
I don't think I'm different or in any way unique
Think about yourself for a minute
And you'll find the answer in it
Everyone's a freak
Sometimes I have toyed
With ideas that I got from good old Dr Freud
Nothing new of course
It may seem to you I try to break through open doors
Oh no, oh no
I just wanna say a lot of that applies to me
'Cause it's an explanation to my split identity
We're like sun and rainy weather
Sometimes we're a hit together
Me and I
Gloomy moods and inspiration
We're a funny combination
Me and I
I don't think I'm different or in any way unique
Think about yourself for a minute
And you'll find the answer in it
Everyone's a freak
Me and I
We're like sun and rainy weather
Sometimes we're a hit together
Me and I
Gloomy moods and inspiration
We're a funny combination
Me and I
I don't think I'm different or in any way unique



ABBA Super Trouper

Think about yourself for a minute
And you'll find the answer in it
Everyone's a freak
We're like sun and rainy weather
Sometimes we're a hit together
Me and I
Gloomy moods and inspiration
We're a funny combination
Me and I

06 Happy New Year

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

No more champagne
And the fireworks are through
Here we are, me and you
Feeling lost and feeling blue
It's the end of the party
And the morning seems so grey
So unlike yesterday
Now's the time for us to say
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have a vision now and then
Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have our hopes, our will to try
If we don't we might as well lay down and die
You and I
Sometimes I see
How the brave new world arrives
And I see how it thrives
In the ashes of our lives

Oh yes, man is a fool
And he thinks he'll be okay
Dragging on, feet of clay
Never knowing he's astray
Keeps on going anyway
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have a vision now and then
Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have our hopes, our will to try
If we don't we might as well lay down and die
You and I

Seems to me now
That the dreams we had before
Are all dead, nothing more
Than confetti on the floor
It's the end of a decade
In another ten years time
Who can say what we'll find
What lies waiting down the line
In the end of eighty-nine
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have a vision now and then
Of a world where every neighbour is a friend
Happy new year, Happy new year
May we all have our hopes, our will to try
If we don't we might as well lay down and die
You and I

07 Our Last Summer

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

The summer air was soft and warm
The feeling right, the Paris night
Did its best to please us
And strolling down the Elysee
We had a drink in each café
And you
You talked of politics, philosophy and I
Smiled like Mona Lisa
We had our chance
It was a fine and true romance
I can still recall our last summer
I still see it all
Walks along the Seine, laughing in the rain
Our last summer
Memories that remain
We made our way along the river
And we sat down in the grass
By the Eiffel tower
I was so happy we had met
It was the age of no regret
Oh yes
Those crazy years, that was the time
Of the flower power
But underneath we had a fear of flying
Of getting old, a fear of slowly dying
We took the chance
Like we were dancing our last dance
I can still recall our last summer
I still see it all
In the tourist jam, round the Notre Dame
Our last summer
Walking hand in hand
Paris restaurants

ABBA Super Trouper

Our last summer
Morning croissants
Living for the day, worries far away
Our last summer
We could laugh and play
And now you're working in a bank
The family man, a football fan
And your name is Harry
How dull it seems
Yet you're the hero of my dreams
I can still recall our last summer
I still see it all
Walks along the Seine, laughing in the rain
Our last summer
Memories that remain
I can still recall our last summer
I still see it all
In the tourist jam, round the Notre Dame
Our last summer
Walking hand in hand
Paris restaurants
Our last summer
Morning croissants
We were living for the day, worries far away

08 The Piper

B. Andersson/B. Ulvén/
Universal/Union Songs AB

They came from the hills
And they came from the valleys and the plains
They struggled in the cold
In the heat and the snow and in the rain

Came to hear him play
Play their minds away
We're all following a strange melody
We're all summoned by a tune
We're following the piper
And we dance beneath the moon
We're following the piper
And we dance beneath the moon for him
And we dance beneath the moon
Sub lina saltamus
They came from the south
From the west and the north and from the east
They waited for the man
Like a parish is waiting for the priest
Longed to hear him play
Play their minds away
We're all following a strange melody
We're all summoned by a tune
We're following the piper
And we dance beneath the moon
We're following the piper
And we dance beneath the moon for him
And we dance beneath the moon
Sub lina saltamus
He gave them a dream
He seduced everybody in the land
The fire in his eyes
And the fear was a weapon in his hand
So they let him play
Play their minds away
We're all following a strange melody
We're all summoned by a tune
We're following the piper

And we dance beneath the moon
We're following the piper
And we dance beneath the moon for him
And we dance beneath the moon

09 Lay All Your Love On Me

B. Andersson/B. Ulvén/
Universal/Union Songs AB

I wasn't jealous before we met
Now every woman I see is a potential threat
And I'm possessive, it isn't nice
You've heard me saying that smoking was my only vice
But now it isn't true
Now everything is new
And all I've learned has overturned
I beg of you
Don't go wasting your emotion
Lay all your love on me
It was like shooting a sitting duck
A little small talk, a smile and baby I was stuck
I still don't know what you've done with me
A grown-up woman should never fall so easily
I feel a kind of fear
When I don't have you near
Unsatisfied, I skip my pride
I beg you dear
Don't go wasting your emotion
Lay all your love on me
Don't go sharing your devotion
Lay all your love on me
I've had a few little love affairs
They didn't last very long.





and they've been pretty scarce
I used to think that was sensible
It makes the truth even more incomprehensible
'cause everything is new
And everything is you
And all I've learned has overturned
What can I do
Don't go wasting your emotion
Lay all your love on me
Don't go sharing your devotion
Lay all your love on me

10 The Way Old Friends Do

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

You and I can share the silence
Finding comfort together
The way old friends do
And after fights and words of violence
We make up with each other
The way old friends do
Times of joy and times of sorrow
We will always see it through
Oh I don't care what comes tomorrow
We can face it together
The way old friends do
You and I can share the silence
Finding comfort together
The way old friends do
And after fights and words of violence
We make up with each other
The way old friends do

Times of joy and times of sorrow
We will always see it through
Oh I don't care what comes tomorrow
We can face it together
The way old friends do

11 Elaine

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

You hate, you scream, you swear
And still you never reach him
You curse, you try to scare
But you can never teach him
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You know they're gonna get you
You try to break away
But they will never let you
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
You come, you stay, you go
It really doesn't matter

You've done it all before
By now they'll know the pattern
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
Now that you're gone, you know they're gonna get you
Now that you're gone, you know they'll never let you
It's a dead end street
They tie your hands and tie your feet
And the street is narrow
A nowhere lane
A nowhere train for Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
You're like a goldfish in a bowl
Elaine, Elaine, Elaine
They have your mind, they'll take your soul
Now that you're gone, you know they're gonna get you
Now that you're gone, you know they'll never let you

12 Put On Your White Sombbrero

(B. Andersson/B. Ulvaeus)
Universal/Union Songs AB

Put on your white sombrero
Saddle your horse my dear
And ride off into the sunset
You'd better go
For there is no
Place for you here

Like an old fashioned hero
You stand before me
You think our life is a movie
My world is real
I live and feel
And I can do without you
Put on your white sombrero
Your red bandana too
Think of this day as a showdown
Goodbye my friend
This is the end
For me and you
Now be a bold vaquero
Don't show your feelings
I'll cry while you're disappearing
Into the night
All dressed in white
Unchained and free, without me
Put on your white sombrero
Like all the cowboys do
Go find a sweet señorita
Somebody meek
Who'll never speak
Harshly to you
You're such a caballero
Proud, never bending
I want someone who will take me
Just as I am, I need a man
Who is in rhyme, With his time
You'll never take me
Just as I am, I need a man
Who is in rhyme, With his time

Credits

Musicians: Drums: Per Lindvall (1). Drums: Ola Brunkert (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Bass: Mike Watson (1, 2). Bass: Rutger Gunnarsson (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Guitars: Janne Schaffer (1, 3, 6). Guitars: Lasse Wellander (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). Saxophones: Lars O. Carlsson, Kątek Wojciechowski, Janne Kling (3). Percussion: Åke Sundqvist (1, 2, 5, 7). Acoustic guitars: Björn Ulvaeus (1, 5, 6, 7). Acoustic guitars: Lasse Wellander and Björn Ulvaeus (8). Keyboards and synthesizers: Benny Andersson (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12). String arrangements: Rutger Gunnarsson (2). Flutes: Janne Kling (8).

Produced by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus. *The Way Old Friends Do* recorded live at Wembley Arena, London, November, 1979. Recorded and mixed at Polar Music Studios, Stockholm. Engineered by Michael B. Tretow.

Cover photos by Lars Larsson. Booklet photos by Per Kagerl/Pressebild, Anders Hanser/Premium Publishing, Anders Hanser/Polar Music Int'l, Polar Music Int'l. Master tape photo by Tomas Finger. Original art direction by Rune Söderqvist. Art direction and redesign 2001 by Fredrik Hurtig/802. New liner notes 2001 by Carl Magnus Palm, with thanks to Ian Cole and Trent Nickson. Remastered 2001 by Jon Astley with Michael B. Tretow. Reissue supervised by Marko Söderström. Reissue project coordinators: Jeanette Andersson and Margareta Lindström. Thanks to Görel Hanser and Carol Benny.

Filming the video for The Winner Takes It All, July 1980. >





